

## TEN TIPS FOR MOSQUITO PREVENTION

**Make sure window and door screens are "bug tight."** Check your screens periodically to make sure there are no holes, and replace worn-out screens.

**Keep your rain gutters clean.** Rain gutters can get clogged with leaves and debris, which impede the flow of water. Not only is that bad for your roof, but it also creates an ideal habitat for mosquito larvae, which need water to grow and develop into adults.

**Get rid of mosquito-breeding containers.** Eliminate cans, tires, buckets, unused plastic swimming pools, and other old containers that collect and hold water. Do not allow water to stand in the saucers of flowerpots or urns, or in pet dishes for more than 2 days.

**If you have bromeliad plants, regularly rinse them out with a garden hose.** Bromeliads are excellent hosts, and each plant can produce more than a hundred mosquitoes a year.

**Prevent puddles in your yard.** Irrigate lawns and gardens carefully to prevent water from standing for more than 2 days.

**Prevent your swimming pool from becoming a breeding ground.** If you are not using the swimming pool, put a cover over it. Make sure the cover doesn't sag and hold puddles of rainwater, which also can allow breeding. Another option is to stock long-term unused pools with mosquitofish, which eat mosquito larvae.

**Protect your children from mosquitoes, especially at night.** Hot, sweaty children playing outdoors at night are like glowing beacons to mosquitoes. Protect them from irritating bites and the possibility of mosquito-borne illnesses by ensuring that skin is covered and, if necessary, apply a repellent containing DEET to their clothing.

**Take special precautions at dusk.** Dusk is a mosquito's favorite time to fly and bite. Mosquitoes aren't strong fliers, and a good breeze will keep them from landing, but a portable fan can substitute. Remember to also wear long sleeves and pants, and insect repellent containing DEET, if necessary.

**Take special precautions in high mosquito areas.** Use headnets, long sleeves, and long pants if you venture into areas with large mosquito populations, like salt marshes.

**Take special precautions when a warning is in effect.** If there is a mosquito-borne disease warning, keep mosquitoes out of your home, and stay inside during the evening when they are especially active.

If you have tried these tips and are still having a mosquito problem around your home, you can call the St. Lucie County Mosquito Control District at 772-462-1692. They offer free on-site inspections to give suggestions and can schedule treatment if it is determined to be necessary.